



ACUPUNCTURE & ACUPRESSURE

Acupuncture Instead of Opioids: The White Paper

Editorial Staff

Six acupuncture organizations have released an extensively referenced 20-page white paper that outlines the profession's value as an alternative to opioid medication for pain relief.

"Acupuncture's Role in Solving the Opioid Epidemic: Evidence, Cost-Effectiveness, and Care Availability for Acupuncture as a Primary, Non-Pharmacologic Method for Pain Relief and Management" is the product of a Joint Opioid Task Force established by the American Society for Acupuncture (ASA) and the Acupuncture Now Foundation (ANF). Other acupuncture organizations participating in the initiative include the American Alliance for Professional Acupuncture Safety (AAPAS, the American TCM Association (ATCMA), the American TCM Society (ATCMS) and the National Federation of TCM Organizations (NFTCMO).



Here are some of the major points emphasized in the white paper, each of which features extensive detail and supporting references (more than 100 overall):

- "Acupuncture is an effective, safe, and cost-effective treatment for numerous types of acute and chronic pain. Acupuncture should be recommended as a first line treatment for pain before opiates are prescribed, and may reduce opioid use."
- "Acupuncture's analgesic mechanisms have been extensively researched and acupuncture can increase the production and release of endogenous opioids in animals and humans."
- "Acupuncture is effective for the treatment of chronic pain involving maladaptive neuroplasticity."
- "Acupuncture is a useful adjunctive therapy in opiate dependency and rehabilitation."
- "Acupuncture has been recommended as a first line non-pharmacologic therapy by the FDA, as well as the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine in coping with the opioid crisis. The Joint Commission has also mandated that hospitals provide non-pharmacologic pain treatment modalities."
- "Among most non-pharmacological managements for pain relief now available, acupuncture therapy is the most effective and specific for opioid abuse and overuse."

To review this important white paper in its entirety, [click here](#).

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